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South Amherst Resident Authors Book About Amherst Sandstone Quarries

James Hieb, www.QuarryTown.net



5/23 -- South Amherst resident James Hieb has authored a book about the sandstone quarries of Lorain County. The book entitled, "[Sandstone Center of the World: Images & Stories of Quarry Life in Amherst, South Amherst, & Lorain County](#)" will debut in June. It chronicles 160 years of a quarry industry that was the largest of its kind in the world.

This particular region, known as the "Sandstone Center of the World," has quarry beginnings in the early 1800s. During the height of its hey-day, several dozen quarries were active with over 2,000 individuals employed. At one point, Bob Hope's father worked at the quarries as a stonemason and master carver.

Sandstone from the Amherst area has, and continues to be used in building projects around the United States and Canada. This book celebrates the deep sandstone heritage of the region, features dozens of photos about quarry life, and highlights the continuing quarry operations of the Cleveland Quarries Company.

"This book would not have been possible without the resources of the Cleveland Quarries Company and the Amherst Historical Society," stated author James Hieb. He added, "many families in northeast Ohio have a quarry story to tell and the stories I have heard the past 15 years played a large role in crafting the vision that has become a reality in this book." Stories told by Foyster Matlock, grandfather of Hieb's wife Christa, are featured in the book's introduction. Matlock spent 30 years at the Cleveland Quarries and at 93 years of age is one of the oldest living retired quarry workers.

The book foreword was written by Amherst quarry enthusiast Sally Cornwell. She wrote, "Today, one cannot look into the depths of these quarries without a feeling of awe and wonder....If the wind is just right and you listen intently, you may hear the sounds of past generations extracting something beautiful from the earth and the master carvers transforming sandstone into works of art."

For more information or to order a copy of this 124 page book, go online to www.quarrytown.net, which also features pictures of quarries in Lorain County. Visit the Amherst Historical Society, Oberlin Heritage Center, or Mindfair Books to pick up a copy of the book as well.

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